

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 SINAI 01598 250625Z  
ACTION SSM-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 OC-06 CCO-00 /022 W  
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R 241355Z AUG 77  
FM USMISSION SINAI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3075

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINAI 1598

FOR SSM DIRECTOR KONTOS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGY: PFOR  
SUBJECT: MANNING LEVELS WATCH STATIONS - 4TH REPORT TO CONGRESS

1. SUMMARY. OPERATORS, NOT SENSORS, ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF OUR EARLY WARNING SYSTEM. OPERATORS HAVE DETECTED AND IDENTIFIED, WITHOUT PRIOR SENSOR ACTIVATION, ALL 35 VIOLATIONS THUS FAR REPORTED BY WATCH STATIONS. USE OF ONLY ONE PERSON PER WATCH STATION WOULD PROVIDE ONLY PARTIALLY EFFECTIVE COVERAGE OF THE STRATEGIC AREA. BUT AS THIS IS ONE OF SFM'S TWO BASIC FUNCTIONS, WATCH STATION OPERATION DESERVES 100 PERCENT FULFILLMENT 100 PERCENT OF TIME. MORALE AND SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS ALSO FAVOR MAINTAINING TWO OPERATORS AT EACH WATCH STATION. AND FINALLY, NEW PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS FOR MONITORING A CENTRALIZED SYSTEM WOULD LARGELY OFFSET PROPOSED PERSONNEL REDUCTION. END SUMMARY

2. FOLLOWING IS COMBINED SFM VIEW ON PROPOSED CENTRALIZATION OF SENSOR READOUT AT SFM AND ESTIMATED REDUCTION OF NINE OPERATIONS PERSONNEL (APRIL 13, 1977 REPORT TO CONGRESS, PAGE 12).

A. OPERATOR INPUT IS ESSENTIAL. ALL GROUND VIOLATIONS SO FAR HAVE OCCURRED IN AREAS OUTSIDE THE SENSOR FIELDS. ALL AIR VIOLATIONS HAVE APPARENTLY BEEN BEYOND SENSOR RANGE. SINCE OPERATORS HAVE MUCH GREATER RANGE AND FIELD OF VIEW THAN PRESENT SENSORS, THEY ARE MUCH MORE LIKELY DURING DAYLIGHT TO FULFILL THE STATIONS' PRINCIPAL TASK OF DETECTING VIOLATIONS AND AT LEAST AS LIKELY

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AT NIGHT. IN FACT, OPERATORS HAVE DETECTED AND IDENTIFIED, WITHOUT PRIOR ACTIVATIONS, ALL 35 VIOLATIONS REPORTED TO DATE BY WATCH STATIONS.

3. ONE WATCH STATION OPERATOR IS NOT ENOUGH. TWO ARE NEEDED FOR OBSERVATION PLUS OTHER OPERATIONS.

A. ONE OPERATOR CANNOT FULFILL ALL TASKS AT A WATCH STATION AND

STILL FULLY COVER MONITORING AND IDENTIFICATION FUNCTIONS. OTHER ACTIVITIES INCLUDE: TTY COMMUNICATION ON MOVEMENTS, EXERCISES AND MANEUVERS; RADIO COMMUNICATION WITH TRAVELLING SFM VEHICLES AND THE BASE CAMP (ESSENTIAL FOR SECURITY); ATTENDING THE GENERATOR; MAINTAINING RECORDS; RECEIVING VISITORS; PLUS ATTENDING TO PERSONAL NEEDS AND POLICING THE STATION.

B. THE 6000 SENSOR ACTIVATIONS PER MONTH ARE CONCENTRATED PRINCIPALLY AROUND THE HOURS OF 0900, 1200 AND 1700. FOR PERHAPS SIX HOURS DAILY, A SINGLE OPERATOR AT GIDDI EAST AND MITLA WEST WOULD BE RESPONDING

FULLY TO ROUTINE SENSOR ACTIVITY (ABOUT ONE PER FOUR MINUTES). AT SUCH TIMES, ONE OPERATOR CANNOT SATISFACTORILY FULFILL BOTH OBSERVATION AND COMMUNICATION TASKS. WHEN USING COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT, THE OPERATOR CANNOT VISIT THE OBSERVATION DECK WHICH PROVIDES THE ONLY 360 DEGREE VIEW OF THE WATCH AREA. IF HE REMAINS ON THE DECK, HE CANNOT PROVIDE THE NECESSARY HARD COPY TTY REPORT REQUIRED FOR VIOLATIONS OR MAJOR ALERTS.

C. BOTH SPEED AND EXTENT OF COVERAGE DURING A MAJOR VIOLATION WOULD BE REDUCED IF ONE OPERATOR WERE WORKING ALONE. THE OPERATOR WOULD LOSE THREE TO FOUR MINUTES IN MOVING FROM THE OBSERVATION DECK TO THE COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT. THEN HE WOULD MISS DEVELOPMENTS TAKING PLACE WHILE HE IS COMMUNICATING AND AWAY FROM THE OBSERVATION DECK.

4. A SECOND OPERATOR IS ALSO IMPORTANT FOR MORALE AND SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS. IF A BUDDY SYSTEM MAKES SENSE IN CIVILIAN CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTIVITIES AND MILITARY SERVICE, IT IS EMINENTLY REASONABLE HERE CONSIDERING DESERT CONDITIONS, WATCH STATION ISOLATION, AND POSSIBILITY OF VIOLENCE.

A. SSM'S PROPOSAL DOES NOT DISCUSS THE OPERATOR'S MOVEMENT TO AND FROM THE WATCH STATIONS. ONE WAY TRIPS TO GIDDI EAST TAKE 25 MINUTES, TO MITLA EAST 40, TO MITLA WEST 65. THESE TIMES MUST BE DOUBLED FOR EACH SHIFT. OPERATORS THUS WOULD SPEND CONSIDERABLE TIME TRAVELLING ALONE ON POOR ROADS, OFTEN AT NIGHT, IN A HAZARDOUS ENVIRONMENT.

B. AN INCIDENT INVOLVING VIOLENCE IS ALWAYS POSSIBLE IN THE EARLY WARNING SYSTEM. GHANAIA TROOPS OUTSIDE THE WATCH STATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO SECURITY FROM OUTSIDE ATTACK. BUT THEY DO NOTHING TO INCREASE A LONE OPERATOR'S ALERTNESS ON THE JOB OR TO DIMINISH HIS ISOLATION. AND THEY WOULD NOT CONTRIBUTE TO THE LONE OPERATOR'S SECURITY WHILE HE IS TRAVELLING BETWEEN THE WATCH STATION AND BASE CAMP.

C. A LONE OPERATOR COULD BE HELPLESS (AND LIKELY UNNOTICED FOR SOME TIME) IF HE SUFFERED A SERIOUS HEALTH BREAKDOWN OR ACCIDENT AT A WATCH STATION.

D. THE ISOLATION OF THE WATCH STATIONS, PLUS THE HAZARDS OF WORKING ALONE, WOULD SERIOUSLY AFFECT THE MORALE OF THE OPERATOR ON AN EIGHT OR TWELVE HOUR SHIFT. THESE FACTORS WOULD DECREASE

A LONE OPERATOR'S ALERTNESS AND HIS EFFECTIVENESS.

5. THE ESTIMATED PERSONNEL SAVINGS MAY BE TOO HIGH.

A. SSM'S PROPOSAL IS UNDERSTOOD AS MOVING SENSOR READOUT EQUIPMENT TO THE BASE CAMP AND PROVIDING CENTRALIZED READOUT PANELS. BECAUSE OF THE NEED SIMULTANEOUSLY TO MONITOR THE EQUIPMENT, MAINTAIN RECORDS AND COMMUNICATE WITH THE WATCH STATIONS, WE ARE LIKELY TO NEED MORE OPERATIONS STAFF ON TWO OF THE COMOPS SHIFTS, AND PERHAPS AN EXTRA TECHNICIAN.

B. THERE ARE NOW 29 OPERATORS FOR DUTY ROTATION DURING A 56-HOUR WORK WEEK. DURING THE SIX HOUR WORK PEAK, THE CENTRALIZED READOUT WILL INVOLVE AN OPERATOR ALMOST FULL TIME IN NOTIFYING THE OBSERVERS AT WATCH STATIONS OF ACTIVATIONS AND FOLLOWING UP ON THEM. THERE WILL BE ABOUT ONE ACTIVATION EVERY  
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FOUR MINUTES AT BOTH MITLA WEST AND GIDDI EAST, PLUS SOME ACTION AT MITLA EAST. AT THOSE SAME PERIODS, THERE IS ALMOST FULLTIME DEMAND FOR AN OPERATOR TO MAN BOTH TELEPHONE AND TTY COMMUNICATIONS (WITH ISRAEL, EGYPT, UN, E-1/J-1 STATIONS, AND VEHICLES), ARRANGE ESCORTS, HANDLE PROBLEMS, AND MAINTAIN LOGS. MAINTENANCE OF THE NEW DIGITAL DISPLAY SYSTEM, PLUS THE AGING OF EQUIPMENT IN THE FIELD, MAY REQUIRE ANOTHER TECHNICIAN.

C. THERE ARE NOW 29 OPERATORS. IT SEEMS DOUBTFUL, EVEN REARRANGING SHIFT PERIODS, THAT COMOPS PERSONNEL COULD BE REDUCED BELOW ABOUT 25. THE RELATIVELY SMALL SAVING IN STAFF WOULD NOT APPEAR TO OFFSET THE LOSS OF EFFECTIVENESS IN THE WATCH STATIONS AND MORALE/ SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS.

6. IN CONCLUSION, I SUGGEST STRONGLY THAT MONITORING AT THE WATCH STATIONS MERITS THE MOST EFFECTIVE POSSIBLE ARRANGEMENTS. THIS CLEARLY REQUIRES TWO PERSONS FOR OPERATING EFFICIENCY, MORALE AND SECURITY. THEY ARE NEEDED LESS BECAUSE OF WORK VOLUME THAN TO COVER SEVERAL FUNCTIONS SIMULTANEOUSLY, TO PROVIDE FASTEST POSSIBLE ALERT/IDENTIFICATION REPORTS, AND TO ASSURE 100 PERCENT ACCOMPLISHMENT OF MISSION. I SUPPORT PROCEEDING WITH THE INSTALLATION OF THE READOUT SYSTEM. IT WOULD APPEAR TECHNICIALLY JUSTIFIABLE TO ASSURE MORE ACCURATE, SECURE MONITORING AND A NEEDED BACKUP SHOULD A WATCHSTATION BE INCAPACITATED OR LOST TO US FOR ANY REASON. I WOULD RECOMMEND MAKING THIS CASE TO CONGRESS, NOTING THAT STAFFING LEVELS MUST CONSIDER NOT JUST ROUTINE BUT EMERGENCY SITUATIONS (INTRUSIONS, VIOLATIONS, ACCIDENTS, VIOLENCE) WHERE TWO WATCH STATION OPERATORS ARE REQUIRED FOR EFFECTIVE, RELIABLE EXECUTION OF MISSION.

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Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009